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Rachel Clarke's *Design Thinking* is a useful book that attempts an explanation of a complex process to create better user experiences. The historical background, the extensive research conducted within this field, and Clarke's examples from within and outside of LIS, demonstrate the difficulty and the significance of this process for solving problems. She defines design thinking as the movement that sprung from the "methods, processes, and perspectives that designers undertake to create products" (p. 2). She later demonstrates the evolution of its meaning over the years. Her purpose in authoring this book is to introduce information professionals to the various steps of design thinking and encourage a culture of creativity and innovation at all levels of the library.

While Clarke's book is too short—at 59 pages—to deliver the complexity and depth owed to this topic, it does ultimately communicate its intended message: drawing library organizations' attention to design thinking and demonstrating a link between librarians' work and that of designers. In urging librarians "to acknowledge—and embrace—their role as designers" (p. 43), she demonstrates the value it brings to improving access to, and the discovery of, information. Clarke's description of the shift in design thinking from developing tangible user products to intangible experiences, aligns closely with library programming efforts. Since libraries' objectives are to deliver social and educational events aimed at connecting communities and engaging them in a variety of learning experiences, it is especially their obligation to participate in, learn about, and be aware of, design thinking.

The book's historical description frames the development of design thinking from an intuitive activity to an explicit formula that affords novices and non-designers—such as information professionals—an opportunity to apply its theories of design. The process consists of employing designer's unique skills, that rely on empathetic discovery, problem finding, and definition, ideation, creation, and evaluation (p. 13). For designers to succeed in each step of this process, they are expected to seek critique from their peers and users to help them deliver a final product that benefits users. As Clarke perceives it, design thinking is meant to place the emphasis on "what designers are *thinking* … in addition to what they are doing" (p. 2). Again, the book emphasizes the benefits librarians can achieve from following these concrete steps to create targeted programs and inviting spaces.

Problem solving is a key focus of design thinking. While some problems are easy to identify, others are not. Referencing design theorists like Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber who

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generated the term “wicked problems” (p. 6) to define “unique, interconnected, and poorly defined problems that cannot be definitively described” (p. 6) extends the scope of issues design thinking is meant to resolve. It also illustrates the complexities design thinking is employed to address. Since “wicked problems” are a common aspect of library operations, it reinforces the value of implementing design thinking. The online catalogue is used as an example to demonstrate the dynamic nature of these problems, where each possible solution only results in further questions that ultimately influence the overall design. An example of such questions is: are libraries solving the problem of access or are they responsible for material inventory? If the problem that needs to be solved is a matter of access, then “is it ease of access, universality of access, remote access, or … all the above?” (p. 20). This example demonstrates the different possible routes libraries consider when addressing these types of problems. Clarke aims to illustrate and engage libraries in recognizing and identifying the dynamic changes each solution brings to the original problem. She also reveals the importance of acknowledging aspects of the problem that remain unresolved because of applying one type of solution.

The application of design thinking relies as much on the process as it does on the organizational environment that cultivates a culture of creativity, innovation, and iteration. Clarke uses the design firm IDEO (https://www.ideo.com/) as an example of an exemplary design thinking environment for libraries to model their operations on. Since IDEO has established its operation on the premise of inclusivity, diversity, and teamwork, their workspaces nurture curiosity as an important step to problem finding and defining. Their main focus is the user and their business style is to embrace creativity and innovation. Having established a safe space for sharing ideas, team members are comfortable proposing “the strangest, most impossible idea [which] can inspire other, more realistic ones” (p. 16). In fact, failure is perceived as a form of growth and learning rather than a taboo. As such, failure is a method of leading designers to more desirable iterations that ultimately offer satisfying outcomes for users.

In illustrating this work environment in detail, Clarke proposes a framework for organizations to adhere to so as to foster successful design thinking environments. Through IDEO, she demonstrates to libraries an accepted and conducive design culture that cultivates a work environment where “the process and mindset” (p. 44) are both appreciated and understood. Securing organizational support is also key to properly implementing design thinking that ensures collegial partnerships and productive interactions. Embracing the steps involved and being open to the possibility of critique and design iterations are also essential to the profession since it reinforces, and shapes approaches that meet community needs. These components are necessary for design thinking to flourish and produce desirable outcomes.

However, adopting one type of user approach can result in drawbacks. In *Design Thinking*, Clarke argues that libraries have mostly adopted a user-centred approach that focuses on delivering tools and services that libraries assume users should have as opposed to tools and services users actually want. This is often problematic if the key decision makers of such tools and services are not representative of the community they serve. She describes this practice as having evolved to rely more on investigative evidence rather than professional assumptions by exercising “needs assessment” (p. 23). Although this approach has returned helpful insights, the emphasis on the “user” aspect has resulted in reducing “people to their use of a thing, rather than engaging with their experiences as human beings” (pp. 23-24). Clarke’s caution against relying solely on user-centred approaches is valid, since it produces

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questions that focus on improving pre-existing tools and services instead of their overall efficacy. She argues that this approach places the burden on the user to identify the problem and propose solutions when they are not in a position to do so (p. 25). Therefore, design thinking in libraries should encourage both a human-centred as well as a value-centred approach that considers both the larger user-journey as well as the community needs to assess and design useful programming.

Clarke deliberately challenges existing library working structures by questioning the past, present, and future of design thinking in these institutions. She suggests the need for mindful and deliberate actions to improve design in libraries, as a whole, from a user-centred, human-centred, and value-centred standpoint. Change within these institutions depends greatly on embedding design thinking principles at early stages in information professionals' careers, making it an essential part of the MLIS curriculum. As a result, this guarantees the eventual presence of design thinking skills at all levels of the organization so as to embrace and foster a conducive culture of innovation, criticism, and design.

Libraries have a social responsibility to their communities since they direct learning and influence education in- and outside of formal classrooms. The principles they adopt, from open education to equal access, and the decisions they make, will have lasting impact that permeate throughout the community to produce positive or negative effects. Design thinking is, therefore, a necessary component for information professionals to adopt. The practice of design thinking is more complex than its prescribed steps, as argued by expert designer Natasha Jen in her 2017 Adobe 99U conference presentation. This is also evidenced by Clarke's reference to mounds of literary research and published works from astute design theorists and practitioners, who believe that design thinking is a phrase and process that only illuminates what comes intuitively to skilled designers. Their publications demonstrate the practice, reflection, and critique needed to reach the level of knowledge that designers should possess. But as Lee-Sean Huang, an adjunct assistant professor of design at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, states in a podcast called Foossa: design thinking is just "a way to open up conversations about design and creative problem solving to wider audiences… [it] gives tools to people to think creatively, work collaboratively and imagine and prototype potential future states" (Huang, 2019, 12:32) that would otherwise not be possible. All information professionals should read this book as an introduction to design thinking.

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